RESTORATION REVIEW

It is comparatively easy to be faithful if we do not care about being contemporary, and easy also to be contemporary if we do not bother to be faithful. It is the search for a combination of truth and relevance which is exacting. Yet nothing else can save us from an insensitive loyalty to formulae and shibboleths on the one hand, and from a treasonable disloyalty to the revelation of God on the other.

— John R. W. Stott

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Jesus Today . . .

JESUS: THE RESTORATION IDEAL

Now and again in these columns I have expressed misgivings about the idea of restoration, even to suggesting that I might change the name of this journal - as a symbol of my protest if for no other reason. My protest is against restorationism, which I am persuaded has been a weighty liability to our people all these years, not so much to the term *restoration*, which is subject to varying interpretations.

It is the common interpretation among Churches of Christ-Christian Churches that I question. This comment by the late P. H. Welshimer, minister of the largest Christian Church in the nation, well represents what I am referring to:

> While unity is desirable, restoration of the church is more desirable, and in place of spending so much time in talking about unity we had better be about the business of having in every community, the restored church of the New Testament, and when we have that we will have unity, and we will never have it without it.

Anyone who reads my history of the Movement will see that "P. H.," as they always called him, is one of my heroes, for he was an irenic spirit in a time of great controversy, insisting that there can be peace if each one will "disagree without being disagreeable." But I believe the man was wrong in the position stated above. His thesis is that *unity can come only through a restoration of the New Testament church.* And he places restoration above unity in importance!

On the very face of it there is something terribly wrong with this viewpoint, and that is that restoration has not yet brought the church any unity. Moreover, with *hundreds* of restorationist sects, each claiming to be "the restored church," it has further divided the church. Restorationism by its very nature tends to be divisive. History proves this to be true. To insist on a unity that comes only through restoration is to forfeit any meaningful plea for the unity of all believers, and this is what has happened in both Christian Churches and Churches of Christ.

Welshimer's own "restored church" (?) in Canton, Ohio is a case in point. Though it was a great church in many ways, there is no evidence that it did anything substantial for the cause of unity. There were many who left other churches and joined Welshimer's, but

this had no unifying effect upon the church at large in Canton. Building a big church does not necessarily "preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

We have a "restored church of the New Testament," to use Welshimer's language, in every town in Texas with a population of 2,000 or more (and usually three or four different kinds of such churches!), but how much unity have they produced? They rather add to the divisiveness, not only in having nothing to do with other churches, but also in being estranged from each other. I dare say that the 300 or more churches of the Restoration Movement in Dallas have done nothing toward unity in all their years in that city. They have simply built churches after their own kind, churches that have nothing to do with other Christians. Such churches cannot really be a *unity* movement.

Restoration, as usually defined and practiced, is not the answer to a divided church. She who supposes that it is may cite an instance where it has had a unifying effect. We must look for some other answer.

There is an authentic source of restoration, if we choose to use that term, and that is Jesus Christ. There is no other way for people to be restored to God and to each other except through him. There is no doctrinal or theological system that will unify us, nor is there any polity or order of worship upon which we will all agree. It is only in the person of Christ, a love and commitment to him, that we can be one. This is what Paul is saying in Eph. 2: 14: "He is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility." The wall of hostility is whatever separates people, which usually is some form of legalism. Our *isms* are no more liberating than those of the Jews. Jesus came and preached peace, the apostle tells us, and this peace removed the enmity --- for those who accepted Jesus as the answer. Only one thing can remove that enmity of separation today, and that is the Christ in our hearts.

I recently read with great interest the discussions that took place between leaders of the Roman Catholic Church and the Disciples of Christ in both the United States and Rome. These lines from Sister Agnes Cunningham, in reference to the value of the conference, caught my eye: "It deepened our convictions that the Lord calls us insistently to 'visible ecclesial unity'; That he is himself the Way by which we journey toward the completion of the oneness that is already ours; that our journey is a continuing pilgrimage."

Our Roman sister makes no plea for unity in the pope or in the Roman system, for she well knows that no such unity is possible. *He is himself the Way!*, she avows, and she recognizes that unity is already ours as a gift. It is only to be completed and appropriated. We *are* one if we be in Christ.

The conference in Rome was on baptism. After the discussions Paul Crow, Jr. of the Disciples gave the pope a copy of the *Declaration and Address* and a medallion of Campbell and Stone, and told the pope how Barton W. Stone had said, “Let Christian unity be our polar star,” and he quoted Thomas Campbell’s famous line, “The Church of Christ on earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one.” The discussion on baptism yielded a surprising list of agreements, one being, “In baptism our sins are forgiven, we become a new creation, and we enter into a new relationship with God as his children and as brothers and sisters with each other in Christ.” The Roman Catholics acknowledged the appropriateness of immersion, but on the basis of early Christian tradition also accept other modes.

We have to agree with Barton W. Stone, as set forth in our last issue, that unity in Christ can never be a “water unity.” We are not one because we see baptism alike or because we have been baptized in the same way.

I am persuaded that we have no right to make anything a basis of acceptance of one as a Christian except her or his loyalty to Jesus Christ. Such issues as forms of worship, polity, baptism are to be studied *within* the fellowship of acceptance, and they cannot be made conditions of acceptance. In a spirit of love we must always bear witness to what we believe the Scriptures to teach on any subject, and we are to practice what we believe to be right. This would include weekly communion and baptism by immersion for the remission of sins. But we are to accept such people as Sister Agnes Cunningham on the same basis that she accepts us, which is the Lordship of Jesus. *Jesus is Lord!* This was the confession the early saints made and died for, and it should be the basis of our fellowship.

I am resolved not to be a sectarian, and I refuse to make anything a test of fellowship that God has not made a condition for salvation. All believers acknowledge the essentiality of faith and obedience to Jesus Christ, but we have to recognize that we are all at different stages in our maturity in Christ and that we must in loving forbearance help each other grow in truth and grace. It is less than magnanimous for me to have exacting conditions for whom I will fellowship. Magnanimity! that is the secret. To be magnanimous like Jesus is the way to a working fellowship.

I have decided that I can enjoy fellowship with anyone who will have fellowship with me, which implies a restriction that must be recognized. I can love others without their loving me, but fellowship is a two-way relationship. I am not going to impose myself on folk who don’t want fellowship with me. Perhaps that is where Christian unity begins: when we *want* to be with each other and to work together. We are divided largely because we want to be.

So, I plead for the authentic restoration, a renewal of relationship with God and with each other based upon loyalty to Jesus. When I find a person that loves Jesus, there is an immediate bond between us, for *his* love draws us together. In that acceptance we can share and grow together, he helping me with my errors and I, to the extent that I can, helping him with his foibles. This is the fellowship of the Spirit that the Scriptures speak of. It is the true restoration. - *the Editor*

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UNITY *WILL* COME, BUT . . .

I shall always remember my first and only visit to Westminster Abbey in London. Anyone would be impressed with its splendor and the fact that monarchs of yesteryear sleep there, but there was something else, wholly unexpected, that impressed me far more.

On one of the columns near the rear of the chapel was a sign that read *Prayers for Christian Unity in this Chapel Each Tuesday at* 3 *P.M.*

Anglicans praying for the unity of God's church! There was nothing incongruous about it especially, even though for sometime in my life I supposed that God did not hear the prayers of Anglicans or Episcopalians. Nor of Presbyterians or Baptists for that matter. I was impressed that people *in any church* would go to the trouble to get together like that and pray for the unity of Christians. I was aware that I had never seen nor heard any such announcement among my own people. Nor had I ever arranged such a gathering myself, not for that purpose alone.

Moreover I *never,* or almost never, hear our people in assembly praying for the unity of Christians. One may conclude that Church of Christ-Christian Church folk do not treat the scandal of a divided church with a sense of urgency. It seems to have no particular place in our thinking. I may of course be mistaken. If I should visit the Sixth and Izzard Church of Christ in Little Rock and see such an announcement in the foyer as I saw at Westminster Abbey, I would be surprised. But I would also be pleased, very pleased.

I would appreciate attending such a gathering. I would like to sit with our sisters and brothers from the Christian Church and from the several divisions of the Church of Christ, along with all other Christians who would like to pray for the unity of God's people on earth. No debating this time, not even any sermons or discussion. The prayers might be intermingled with songs of praise. We would come quietly and leave quietly. We would pray, just pray. This would of course include penitential and confessional prayers for our sins and the sins of our people for either creating or tolerating a divided church. Our

conduct has been scandalous! It is imperative that we pray and ask God to forgive us for what we have done to His church.

I say all this in order to say that the first order of business should be to recognize that *the unity of the Church of Christ on earth will one day be a fact.* Unity will come, *but. . .* We must believe that its coming can be hastened by our fervent prayers and dedicated effort.

My main reason for believing that unity will come is because our Lord prayed for it. Have you read the prayer in Phillips translation? “I am not praying only for these men but for all those who will believe in me through their message, that they may all be one. Just as you, Father, live in me and I live in you, I am asking that they may live in us, that the world may believe that you did send me.”

Jesus was facing the cross when he prayed that prayer, a prayer that *believers* would be united, which is not necessarily a prayer for the structural unity of churches. We don’t know what might become of church structures, or how the Father might use them, but we can believe that Jesus’ prayer will one day be answered, and that *Christians* will be united before a lost world. It will in fact be this that will win the world, when unbelievers see love and oneness in the lives of those that profess Christ.

We must agree with Peter Ainslee when he said: “The winning of this world to Christ is a big task . . . the biggest ever undertaken.

. . . It cannot be done by a divided church. There is no more idle talk than to talk of the divided church’s winning this world.”

Unity! So that the world will believe. That is the way Jesus put it. When he commissioned his apostles to bear the message to all creatures, he could not have possibly supposed that they could do it *divided.*

If we can hasten unity by our prayers and efforts, it is well that we be as practical as possible. Mere theorizing will not get us anywhere. I suggest that we all give consideration to the following:

1. *Pray unity*. Everyday we should join our Lord in praying for the unity of all believers. This will hone our hearts and minds to fulfill that prayer in our own lives each day.

2. *Think and talk unity*. We should do this in *universal* terms, for it defeats our purposes to dwell upon minutiae. All who love Jesus and seek to emulate his character have a great deal in common. Love, joy, peace should be our great themes. Don’t think of a neighbor as a Baptist or a Roman Catholic, but as one with whom you have much in com-

mon *in the Lord.* Thinking this way helps to make it so. If you stress the things that divide, you will not hasten the answer to Jesus' prayer. Think *catholic* --- those universal truths that by their very nature unite, such as the grace of God.

3. *Realize that you don't have to be judge, for each stands to his own master*. This is the great truth that you have on your side, but one little utilized. Memorize Rom. 14:4: "Who are you to judge another man's servant. It is before his own master that he stands or falls." I am to love and accept you, even when you are wrong, and leave the judging to the Lord. This will do more for the unity of the church than can be imagined.

4. *Grow within yourself a conscience on the unity of church*. Don't allow yourself to be "at ease in Zion" on the subject. Be burdened. Look for ways in which you can be a "unity movement" in your own life. There is someone that you can reach out to that no one else may be able to reach, remembering that it is love that binds everything together in perfect harmony (Col. 3: 14).

5. *Think of the church as one, for it really is*. Though it is not realized, unity is nonetheless real in that it is the very nature of the church to be one. That is the meaning of the greatest non-Biblical quotation in our heritage: *The Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one.* Thomas Campbell was not saying it *should* be one or someday will be one, but it *is* one. It cannot be the church without being one. But still it is wracked with schism, and since this is contrary to the nature of the Body of Christ we must do all we can to rid the church of the blight of partyism.

6. *Be big-minded*. Magnanimity is a Christian virtue. We must be too large-souled to allow trifles to keep up separated from each other. Think of the great soul of Jesus: he always had time for *anybody,* whether slaves, lepers, prostitutes, the dispossessed. He was slow to draw lines, whether race, religion, or sex. No one was reluctant to approach him. He did not come to judge but to liberate. Let's be like Jesus and be magnanimous rather than like the Pharisees who had to be right about everything. It is the big person that can allow someone else to be different from herself. We can do much for peace and unity by resolving to make ourselves over rather than the other person. Philip. 4:5 is one of the great unity passages *Let your moderation (gentleness) be known to all men.*

Remember that we are not divided over doctrines and practices as much as over attitudes. Partyism is a disease of the heart. - *the Editor*

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WHAT YOUR NEIGHBORS BELIEVE

You might be surprised by what some of the polls reveal about your neighbors. Would you have supposed, for instance, that Roman Catholics are more ecumenical than Protestants and that nine out of ten teenagers say they pray? If those findings do not send you, here is one that will: 89% of the *unchurched* say they believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and 68 % of the same group believe that Jesus was raised from the dead.

A new book by George Gallup and Daniel Poling on our nation's religious faith, which is based on numerous polls conducted by Gallup and others, gives information for all of us to think about. We can relate to our communities much better if we know something about what is going on in people's minds. The authors emphasize that the American people have a great hunger for meaning and direction in their lives. They want to be a part of a living, vibrant fellowship that deals realistically with the sensitive issues facing the world. The unchurched do not feel especially negative toward the institutional church, but they think the church is incapable of meeting the crises in the world and is far too concerned with its own well-being. And by referring to the *unchurched* we are talking about 41 % of the population --- 61 million souls!

The Roman Catholics have probably changed more in recent years than the rest of us. Almost 90% of them have positive feelings toward their "separated brethren" and almost that many think their church should relate more to other churches. Especially interesting is the "Ogden Covenant" that was entered into by Episcopalians and Roman Catholics in Ogden, Utah. They covenanted to pray for each other and to find occasions to worship together, as well as to cooperate in projects for social justice. This openness has been especially apparent since the days of Pope John 23rd, who had a propensity for opening windows. He was elected, because of his age, as merely "a caretaker pope," but the church got more than it bargained for. He proceeded to lead his people to changes hardly before dreamed of, such as lay ministry, mass in English, modern garb for nuns, ecumenical outreach. So the Roman Catholics today are more open toward Protestants than Protestants are toward them.

It is what the polls reveal about the unchurched that interests me most of all. The world is not as "worldly" as we might think, not in terms of what they really want. Better than 90% of them want more emphasis placed on traditional family values, and almost that many want more respect for authority. The majority of them are opposed to so much sexual freedom, and they believe that extra-marital sex is *always* wrong. While they feel they were "over exposed" to church in their youth, fully 75 % of them want their children to have religious education. Though they no longer attend any church, a rather high

percentage say they would consider joining a church. There are obstructions, the main ones being the time that goes to work and to sports.

I was pleasantly surprised to learn that 76% of the people out there in the world pray to God, and 45 % of them say they pray every day! One is left to wonder if maybe worldlings do not pray more than church members. Almost half of them believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God, and 25 % testify to having had a born-again experience. Still they belong to no church.

Pollsters have been at work among the teenagers, both in and out of the church. Nine out of ten say they pray, and 40% say that religion plays an important part in their lives. They believe in God more than their parents do. In recent years they have been especially influenced by Yoga, TM, charismatic movements, faith healing, and Eastern religions. In fact 27 millions of Americans, many of them teenagers, have been touched in one way or another by these cults.

Teenagers and young adults are sensitive to injustices and feel that the church is unconcerned. They want to live a good life and grow spiritually. They have a strong desire for a life of humanitarian service and fully one-third of them would like to get into some kind of social outreach as a career. Love and sincerity are the virtues they most admire. And our youth go to church more than the youth of 11 other nations that were surveyed. In Japan, for instance, 74% of the youth said they had no interest in religion. Nor do the youth of other nations think they should go out of their way to help others. When presented with the case of a person who has lost his way, the youth of other nations said they would help him if he asked for the help, while our youth indicated they would volunteer to help without being asked.

As Gallup and Poling look to the church of the future, they suppose the “electric church” will have to be reckoned with, for this is “church” to many. And they are raking in the money. Main-line denominations will garner 20-30 millions a year from their congregations for their varied ministries, while a single TV evangelist is a piker if he doesn’t do better than that. Jerry Falwell anticipates one million a week this year; Oral Roberts takes in 60 million a year, and this increases 25 % a year; the Armstrong empire, before it began to crumble, took in 75 million a year. Billy Graham runs back in the herd with a moderate 30 million a year. Some theologians, such as Martin Marty, consider the electronics church a threat to “real life” Christianity.

One reason for the success of the electric preachers is that there is a definite turn toward orthodoxy across the land. The younger clergy believe in a real Adam and Eve, a real resurrection, and a real heaven, much more than their older counterparts. Fully 87 % of the younger preachers believe that Jesus Christ is the only hope of heaven.

On and on these revelations go, surprising us with what our neighbors really believe. I was surprised to learn, for instance, that the majority of whites would welcome blacks to their churches, though fully one-half of all white churches still have not a single black.

And I was displeased to have my fear confirmed that many children born today will grow up in a single parent home --- fully half of them, if you can believe it.

I was pleased to learn that so few girls growing up want to be a "career girl," only 9%. The vast majority want a home, children, family life.

The home today and in the future is handicapped with so few grand-parents living in. They are mostly in nursing homes. We are reminded of Arnold Toynbee's plug: "Grandparents and grandchildren are allies against a common enemy," and so they need each other more than they have each other. But the home still hangs in more than we might think, with 42 % still saying grace at the table and 44 % still talking about God and religion with their children.

All this says a great deal to us in the church. We need to move in. Or maybe we need to move *out* and touch our world. It appears to be ready when we are. --- *the Editor*

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Pilgrimage of Joy. . . No. 58

THE WONDERS OF KOINONIA

W. Carl Ketcherside

As the time drew nearer for the announced demise of *Mission Messenger,* we were besieged by offers to take it over and continue it. A good many of these offered to continue it in the manner to which it had been accustomed. I steadfastly refused all of these. It was my contention that no one else could edit the paper as I had done. Thirty-seven years of trial and error had stamped it with the impress of my personality and thought. It was a baby which Nell and I had conceived and to which we had given birth. It was a part of us. The transfer of it to another was as unthinkable as it would have been to give one of our grandchildren to someone else to raise.

When that did not work we kept getting offers to buy our mailing list. It was just under ten thousand and consisted of many who had already been introduced to buying books by mail. I stubbornly refused to sell it. It seemed to me it would be a complete betrayal of trust. Those who sent a subscription want the paper. They did not want to receive a fistful of mail every day advertising everything from neckties to cheese. When I announced that

the mailing list was not for sale, I was told that everyone else was doing it. Some even became a little huffy and sarcastic. But none of these things moved me and we quit with our list --- and our honor --- intact.

Of course, a great many who lamented our planned discontinuance wrote begging us to continue. This was especially true of those who had recently started to read the little journal and who wanted to absorb more of my thinking. It was also the case with those who had been subscribers from the beginning. It had been like one of the family to them. I wrote them all, thanking them for their confidence, but telling them that I wanted the paper to die in my arms and lay it gently to rest. I did not want to see it go out with its back against the wall and the baying hounds moving in for the kill. A great many editors have continued too long and have done as much damage in their final few years as they did good in all of the previous decades of their writing.

Besides that, I had a lot of reading I wanted to do, and a lot of personal work that I wanted to perform. There were miles to go before I could sleep. There had always been certain inhibitions created by having to get out the paper. I felt that when I mailed out the last issue and laid down the pen it would give me a sense of freedom I had not known for years. But meanwhile I was in the final year and I made some serious and far-reaching suggestions to the brethren which would get us off the sectarian hook on which we had impaled ourselves. These were all bound together in the book "*One in Christ*." It has long ago sold out.

In August of 1975, I went to the congregation at New Liberty, near Windsor, Illinois for their centennial. It was a beautiful old meetinghouse out in the country. I had held meetings there when I was just coming into manhood. I had baptized scores of people in the nearby Kaskaskia River. It was only about three miles from Sand Creek, where Daniel Sommer had read his fateful Address and Declaration which started us down the long road of fighting and division. Only eternity will reveal the cost of the strife which began with that lethal dose. When I first went to the area I was not only a victim, but an actual practitioner of the sectarian spirit. Now I rejoiced to see the descendants of those who had sued each other in the courts sitting together in heavenly places.

Less than a week later I was back at a family camp in Mechanicsville, near Richmond, Virginia. I delivered four addresses which were entitled: Can the Home Survive the Shock?; How to Keep From Coming Unglued; Who Is Raising Whom These Days?; and Darling, *You* Are Growing Old. I ran the entire gamut of life experiences from the purpose of the home through marriage, parenthood and old age. It was easy to talk to those who were eager to listen and we rejoiced to be with each other in the Lord.

I went next to the Area Men's Meeting in Chicago. It was great to be back with the men who worked in the city which Carl Sandburg called "Hog Butcher of the World, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat." I went over to visit the inner city work. It was doing good but I came away with a feeling that culturally we are ill-adapted as a people to penetrate the hard shell of the city. There are no doubt enough people in Chicago from a restoration movement background to make a congregation many times the size of any we have there. But they are hiding. They are running from themselves. Our rural, Southern-oriented, social culture and life-style has not equipped us to face the problems of a black, Oriental and Southern European conglomeration. It was great to talk and visit and eat with men who had accepted Satan's dare. But it was obvious that we needed a radical reformation, one that cut to the bone.

My very next work was a totally different kind. I was with the Northland Christian Church in Danville, Illinois. The congregation had a lovely structure in which to meet, and was composed of good middle-class Americans. It was a distinct change from the drug-pushing, prostitute-ridden, gang-harassed Chicago streets. It made me feel the force of "East is east and West is west, and never the twain shall meet." I will confess that this has been a source of a lot of anxiety to me. I have always held that the blood of Jesus will cleanse anyone regardless of how filthy, dirty and scabby his sins may have made him. I have an almost unconquerable urge to button-hole people on the streets and tell them about the grace of God. I'm drawn by a deep inner compulsion, a sense of destiny, a real deep-down feeling that makes me want to go down highways and alleys and compel them to come in.

Next I went to Orrville, Ohio. If you do not know, this is the home of Smucker's --- the jam people. Years ago the German family of Smucker began making apple butter on a small scale for sale to the neighbors. As time went on their fame spread and their business grew in Ohio like that of Walter Knott had in California. Now they process thousands of tons of fruit, as well as making sorghum, honey and peanut butter. They have become "jam merchants to the world." Several of the members worked for them. The Smuckers had Anabaptist roots and this is evidenced in the town. It is a lovely and clean place, like German-oriented towns often are. Kenneth Baldwin ministered to a congregation of gracious and diversified folk.

The following week I was in Flora, Illinois to address the Southern Illinois Christian Convention. The town was named after the Roman goddess of flowers, whose festival, the Floralia, was inaugurated in Rome 250 years before Jesus was born. The meetings were held at First Christian Church which has in excess of 1250 members. I taught an afternoon workshop and spoke at night. The auditorium was filled to capacity.

I went next to Piqua, Ohio, which has a history reaching back before we gained our freedom from English domination. In 1749 a fort and trading post were established here. The town was incorporated as Washington in 1807, the same year Thomas Campbell left Ireland for America on the good ship Brutus. The name of the town was changed to Piqua in 1823. Dave Huddlestun was working with the congregation while I was there with the brethren.

It was while I was there I met Dr. Marcus Miller. He had just written a book “Roots By The River.” He sent me a copy. I devoured it. I read it with such avidity I could hardly put it down until I had read every word of it. The preface begins with these words: “This is a commentary and a history of the Tunkers or the Old German Baptist Brethren who settled in the upper Great Miami and Stillwater Valleys of Ohio. It attempts to reveal a little of the personalities and human nature of those who lived in these valleys, a little of the physical and a little of the spiritual sufferings which they encountered, and a little of the thinking that went into some of the courses which they chose to take.”

The book details the divisions which beset the “old Brethren.” Like ourselves they were caught up in the frightful tensions which tore at a movement that was far removed from the social climate of ancient Judea, and like ourselves they had their “progressives” and “Faithful Brethren.” They had problems with protracted or revival meetings, with Sunday Schools and with Social Meetings. They resisted bitterly a “salaried or paid ministry which was believed to be against the apostolic order.” They had problems with the bicycle of which was designated “a modern invention, popular in the world and creeping into the church.” In 1925 they wrestled with the radio, and later with television as “an influence for evil.” One of the biggest hassles was over the starting of Christian schools. Another was over the introduction of the automobile. Hours were spent in denouncing Ford and Chevrolet for leading us down a road with no ending. As I read this interesting volume, I could see our own movement on almost every page of this much older and more venerable attempt to “restore the primitive order.” I was deeply indebted to Dr. Miller who still wears the “plain clothes” including the coat with the standing collar.

Incidentally, the Dunkard Brethren, in 1911, reached a dress decision which has been binding ever since. It includes the following statement: “That the brethren wear their hair and beard in a plain and sanitary manner. That the mustache alone is forbidden. Parting the hair in the middle or coming it straight back is recommended for both brethren and sisters.” The Dunkard Brethren should not be confused with the Old Order German Baptist Brethren. They have a common origin, but there have arisen differences which have driven them apart. Does that sound familiar to you?

My next trip was to Meadville, Pennsylvania. I found the congregation meeting a couple of blocks from the campus of Allegheny College. The college was started in 1815 and chartered in 1817. It was loosely affiliated with the Methodist Church and was noted for its library of 140,000 volumes. Ida M. Tarbell, who was a native of Erie County, had written "A Life of Abraham Lincoln" in 1900. In preparing for it she amassed a tremendous collection of Lincolniana which she left to the school. I went to the campus and was walking across it when I heard my name called. I was surprised to see a man whom I knew. He had grown up in the Churches of Christ but had long since gone to the Disciples of Christ. He was head of a department at the school. We felt that it was providential that I just happened to be walking across the campus so we could meet.

There were several brethren from the non-instrument congregations who attended the meetings. Some came from as far away as Youngstown, Ohio. The auditorium was filled each night and we had a glorious time. Nothing marred our kinship with one another and the fellowship was unabated. I stayed with Brother and Sister Hessler and it was truly "a home away from home." After the meetings at night a group of brethren would go with us to the hospitable home, and we would talk until almost midnight.

I have thought a lot about the wonders of *koinonia.* As William Barclay says, it is such a rich word that no single English term can describe it. It literally means "to share a common life." The New English Version so renders it every time it occurs. But the common life we share is that of the Spirit. It is not just putting up with one another, or enduring each other. It is at once so beautiful and thrilling that nothing else can ever take its place in the association of Christians. I think it was one of the grandest things that God ever did for us, the providing of a relationship that is so intimate and full it transcends our differences.

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Highlights in Restoration History. . .

"UNION IN TRUTH"

Our pioneers had a way with slogans. Most of our readers could recall two or three of them, such as *Let Christian unity be our polar star* or *Christ our only creed* or *In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; in all things love.* One can get a fairly good grasp of the nature of their "Plea," as they called it, by examining their many slogans.

This one is especially pregnant with meaning. *Union in truth!* While we sometime distinguish between union and unity, they used the terms synonymously, and I think rightly so. Some versions of the Bible use them interchangeably. Unity is union and union is unity. *Unity must be in truth.* This they believed, and I suppose we would all agree. I have not met the first person who advocates *unity in error.*

While all persuasions among us believe that unity (or union) must be in truth, we differ on the meaning of both terms. Some see unity as agreement on some set of doctrines, which equates unity with conformity. Others of us see it as based upon relationship, marriage being a good example. Husband and wife may not agree on some things, but they are *one* or united in their marriage. Peter and Paul may have had their differences, but they were nonetheless united in Christ. If unity must mean agreement on all points, then we may presume that unity is very rarely attained. The fact that Eph. 4:2 makes "forbearing one another in love" a means of preserving unity would imply that there can be oneness amidst disagreement and differences. If unity is a matter of seeing everything alike, what is there to forbear? There is no need for love to hide a multitude of sins (I Pet. 4:8) if we all have to see everything alike.

We have just as much of a problem with the meaning of *truth.* Yes, we all agree that unity must be in truth, but we make truth include all our petty party claptrap. Some make *not* eating in the church building a matter of truth. And I have just read an account by Adron Doran in *The World Evangelist* of one of our old churches in Kentucky. It was first a Christian Church, he explains, but a half century or so ago an instrument was introduced and was used for some years. I noted with interest that it was called a Christian Church both before and after they used the instrument. But someone convinced them that the instrument was a sin, so it was moved out. He also told them that they should change their name to Church of Christ. While this has all the marks of a church moving from one party to another, we are assured that this was a matter of *truth* --- including the name Church of Christ! Does this mean that the congregation was *not* a Church of Christ and not "walking according to truth," when it was called a Christian Church and yet non-instrumental?

It illustrates how we get ourselves into trouble when we presume to determine the parameters of truth. *Union in truth* has no meaning if "truth" is made to include everybody's opinion.

Dr. Robert Richardson was one of the pioneers who was careful to distinguish between truth and *the* truth. Strictly speaking, he would say, unity is in *the* truth. He noted that Pilate asked the wrong question when he asked *What* is *truth?* What is *the* truth? is the vital question, and he finds this in the basic facts of the gospel. He observed that it has always been a "restless zeal for purity of doctrine" that has given us all the creeds. And so the

church usually "saves" and "condemns" on the basis of some theory of religion. Speaking of trying to base unity upon "true doctrine" he noted: "To expect entire uniformity of sentiment in the whole minutiae of Christian doctrine is utterly visionary and futile. He claimed that the Campbell reformation is the only instance in all Protestantism where a distinction was drawn between *truth* and *the truth.*

The basis of union, Richardson urged, is in the confession of the great fundamental truth of Christianity, that Jesus Christ is the son of God, which is the *common* faith and *the* truth. All truths are indeed true, he grants, but not all truths are equally important. *The* truth, the doctor insisted, is the gospel, and it is this that is the basis of union. This does not mean that doctrinal truths are not important, for indeed they are, but that they cannot be made the basis of union. Doctrine is for the edification of the church, while *the* truth is the basis of union.

This paragraph from Richardson's pen should help us to see the relationship between truth and unity.

> Thus in the very beginning of this effort to reform religious society, the subject matter of a saving or essential faith was distinguished both from the uninspired deductions of human reason, and from those divine teachings which, however necessary to enable the believer to make proper advances in Christian knowledge, are by no means necessary to the Christian faith.

Such distinctions should help us to better understand such Scriptures as the following:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life." (Jn. 14:6)

"When the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." (Jn. 16:13)

"Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice." (Jn. 18:37)

"That the truth of the gospel might continue with you." (Gal. 2:5)

"You heard the word of truth." (Eph. 1:13)

"Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God." (Rom. 15:8)

"God . . . has chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (2 Thess. 2: 13)

"that we might be fellow helpers to the truth" (3 Jn. 8)

"to them which believe and know the truth" (1 Tim. 4:3)

It can hardly be concluded from such passages that *the* truth refers to all truth ever revealed to man, or to all the facts or truths in the Bible. It is much closer to say that the truth is centered in the Person of Christ. Even "the truth of God" refers to the great revelation of His Son. Jesus was asking about this truth when he asked his disciples *about*

himself, "Who do men say that I am?," he asked them. He was teaching them that *he* was the truth of God.

So, when one is right about Jesus --- *right* in that he loves him and is loyal to him, enthroning him as the Lord of his life --- he is "walking in the truth," even though he may be either ignorant of or wrong about other truths that are subordinate to the great truth that God's son has come into this world.

This means that *Union in truth* is unity in Jesus Christ. If you are in him and I am in him, then we are in union with each other as well as united with him. That unity will be strengthened and deepened by the great doctrinal truths. You may be several grades ahead of me in the "school of Christ" and thus know things I do not yet know. You may be right about some things that I am wrong about. But we are equal in Christ in that *the* truth has made us the children of God, once it is believed and obeyed.

Can there be any other basis of union than union in Jesus Christ? --- *the Editor*

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BOOK NOTES

Those of you who have access to the *Millennial Harbinger* will want the Index to the set that is now available, having been prepared through years of effort by David J. McWhirter of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society in Nashville. 19.95 postpaid.

If you prefer a more conservative one-volume commentary on the entire Scriptures, we suggest *The New Bible Commentary: Revised*, edited by Donald Guthrie. It is now completely up-to-date in drawing upon new discoveries and information. 24.95 postpaid. If you venture a more "liberal" approach, we highly recommend *Peake's Bible Commentary.* Back to my days at Harvard I've always heard of "Peake" as a great name in Bible commentaries. It too is now completely revised. We can sell you a copy at 24.95, which is a 10.00 reduction from the regular price. But Peake is obviously not for everyone.

D. Martin Lloyd-Jones was a physician turned theologian, and he has written some of the best stuff ever. His *Studies on the Sermon on the Mount* will thrill your soul. The two-volume set is now in one volume for 15.95 postpaid. *His Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Its Cure* at only 5.95 postpaid is excellent. We are willing to issue these titles on a money-back guarantee. They would make excellent gifts.

For years we have sold *The New Westminster Dictionary of the Bible* with good conscience and to the satisfaction of the customer. There are many Bible dictionaries, but we believe this one does more for you than any. 16.95 postpaid.

Memoirs of Alexander Campbell, two volumes in one is now 19.95, but it is still a bargain, for it is a veritable gold mine for studies in Restoration history. And we still have *The Fool of God,* a historical novel on Campbell's life for 5.50 pp.

You can read an excellent account of the early centuries of the church in only 177 pages in *A Short History of the Early Church* by Harry R. Boer. It tells of the persecutions, Gnosticism, Marcionism, Montanism, the works, all lean. 4.50 pp.

J. I. Packer, one of the seminal writers today, says God has spoken in order to make friends of us. His *God Has Spoken* (1965) has been republished with a new introduction by the author. 4.55 pp.

Do you want to learn to say "I love you," or do you want someone else to learn it? For only 2.50 pp. we will send you *How Do You Say,* "I *Love You"?* It is the kind of book that changes lives.

Several of our readers are pleased with *What the Bible Says About Faith and Opinion* by W. Robert Palmer. But it is more than what the Bible says in that it is an excellent treatment on the subject since the time of our pioneers. 13.50 pp.

For 3.50 we will send you Barclay's paperback *New Testament,* a new translation by the old Scotsman himself. And since the Mormons continue to be ubiquitous, we still have *The Mormon Papers* at 4.10. This book leaves no Mormon stone unturned, including an expose of the prophet's spurious translation from the Egyptian papyri. The last chapter is a practical guide on how to get a Mormon to examine the basis of his faith.

This is a sample page from *The Stone-Campbell Movement: An Anecdotal History of Three Churches,* by Leroy Garrett, after years of painstaking research. While this is but a copy of a copy of the original type, it gives you an idea what it will look like. The pre-pub price is 17.95, which is a bargain as books go these days. Send us your name to reserve a copy. We will enclose invoice with the book. It will be some weeks yet before it is ready. College Press, the publishers, are giving the book a unique touch: some 35 new drawings of the heroes of the Movement, with individual biographies, from the Campbells to P. H. Welshimer, G. C. Brewer, and Marshall Keeble, whom we depict as "the father of the BLACK Church of Christ." You had better reserve a copy or you may miss the first printing!

Chapter Sixteen

More Editor Bishops: Daniel Sommer and David Lipscomb . . .

THE MOVEMENT DIVIDES

The story circulates in Texas, which cannot be documented, that there is a man in Dallas who makes a hobby of collecting cornerstones engraved *Church of Christ: A.D. 33*. Be he friend or foe to the Church of Christ, his hobby is not without its resources, for it was not uncommon in the early decades of this century for this wing of the Stone-Campbell Movement to affirm its integrity in this manner. After all, A.D. 33 is an acceptable date for the beginning of the New Testament church, and these people were persuaded that they were that church duly restored, so why should not the cornerstone of the new building bear witness to the fact?

One well-known spokesman for these people, Leroy Brownlow, puts it simply: "I am a member of the Church of Christ because Christ is the Founder of only one church."[1] While that proposition in itself is as ecumenical as Thomas Campbell's *Declaration and Address*, it would be interpreted by many as sectarian in that the writer is referring to "the Church of Christ" as something less than the church universal. Another spokesman, David E. Harrell, leaves no doubt as to how he views the church universal: "The group to which I belong is the church universal." Sharing in the Reed Lectures in Nashville with a scholar from both the Christian Church and Disciples of Christ, Harrell went on to say that as a "radical legalist" he had nothing in common

1. Leroy Brownlow, *Why I Am a Member of the Church of Christ*, Fort Worth: Published by author, 1945, pp. 22-27.

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READERS' EXCHANGE

You have lifted many burdens from my life. I'm especially built up with the freedom of a greatly enlarged "family." I was exclusive for a long time. - *Charles Hudson*

You encourage me to stay with the Church of Christ even though I am not getting the depth of Bible learning that I hunger for. I have to go to the local Presbyterian church during the mid-week to "get into the word." Why are there so few Bible scholars in the Church of Christ? Your publication is a Church of Christ oasis, and our desert is dry. - *Janelle Thomas, Aurora, Co.*

We have preachers' meeting in our area of both non-instrument and instrumental preachers. One of the men who attends says he is an old friend of yours. His name is Darrell Bolin. Like myself, he has a great burden for the restoration movement and is concerned over our divisions. We all look forward to the day when all brethren will once again meet in unity - *Thomas R. McKeone, Coudersport, Pa.*

I wish we could persuade people to use the Good News Bible. It is much easier to understand. But the King James holds the throne in most minds, and they are afraid of anything else. Last Sunday someone read from the Living Bible and several complimented him, for they could see the difference and better understood what was read. I don't care much for the Living Bible since it is a paraphrase, but at least it points up the value of other translations. - *Percy Faenger, Bonne Terre, Mo.*

The most memorable article is "The Church of Christ of Tomorrow." It is gratifying and encouraging to have one's prayers and hopes so beautifully put into words and laid before one's eyes. Thanks for verbalizing what so many of us have been sporadically rolling over inour minds. My study of the *Memoirs of A. Campbell* has shown me how wrong I was about him. If he showed up in a Church of Christ today, the comments he would feel compelled to make would not doubt cause him to be disfellowshipped. --- *Marsha and Phil Elam, Chattanooga, Tn.*

We really do appreciate *Restoration Review,* but I believe you goofed in your assessment of the average preacher's salary in the June issue. While a beginning floor sweeper in this area's largest factory does surpass $25,000 yearly, most of the churches of which I am aware pay far less. A more accurate average is the $12,000 to $18,000 range, with some much lower. --- *Stan Daulton, E. Peoria, Il.*

(One must remember that in Texas everything is bigger. Even the baloney, cut it as you will! --- *Ed.)*

Its practically unheard of in this area among our brethren to admit that there are "possibly" Christians in any of the denominations. --- *Marguerite McSpadden, Dumas, Tx.*

(This would sound strange to our pioneers who launched a movement "to unite the Christians in all the sects." How can you unite the Christians if there are none to unite? It is just as well that Churches of Christ are gradually overcoming the "only Christians" complex, even if west Texas has to come in last! --- *Ed.)*

I want to thank you for showing me and countless others that thinking and using our minds about issues that the "Church of Christ" censures is not unhealthy or wrong, but is essential in our search for Jesus. There are many of us across our great country who will carry your dream of an open fellowship, free grace and unquenching love to our brothers and sisters in Christ. --- *David Woods, Wharton, Tx.*

It should be clear, it seems to me, to anyone who studies history seriously, that it is not possible to re-establish the first century church in the twentieth. It is a contradiction to promote such ideas, and only serves to deceive the credulous to continue fighting the old battles. One point that I have never seen given any serious consideration by any of our conservative people would perhaps help open new thoughts. It is that the "New Testament church" did not have or know the New Testament. Therefore, all the nonsense about the second and third century church drifting away from the clear teaching of the New Testament is completely irrelevant . . . Our people have frequently made so much of the notion that the Bible is "the Word of God" which the church was given to be its "inerrant" and "infallible guide, that they have overlooked the point that the church didn't even have the NT until the fourth century. Therefore, the NT church we say we have restored must be a church that does not have the NT. --- *Comer Shacklett, Westfield, NJ.*

The 1980's will be a tough decade for periodicals and newspapers. Many have already closed down. The old law of the survival of the fittest will be at work, and it may take in its wake some publications that are altogether worthy. The way things are going periodicals may have to be issued on a "plus postage" basis.

This is our way of saying we need your help now more than ever. While we receive unsolicited donations that really make a difference, we are only asking that you remember others when you renew your sub. "You are our epistles" applies in this case, for we have no way of getting the word around except through you. Our sub rate goes up in January but only moderately. You can still send the paper to others at only 2.00 per name per year, no limit, counting your own renewal. Pray with us that in this, our last decade, we may reach as many searching hearts as possible.

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